

COMMISSIONERS' SPECIAL MEETING, SEPTEMBER 27, 2013

The Commissioners of the East Hartford Housing Authority held a special meeting on Friday, September 27, 2013 at the Authority's central office building located at 546 Burnside Avenue, East Hartford, Connecticut. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Robert Keating at 1:38 p.m.

1. **ROLL CALL:** Commissioner James W. Patterson, Jr.
Commissioner John Carella
Commissioner Prescille Yamamoto
Commissioner Hazelann Cook
Chairman Robert Keating

Also present were: Debra Bouchard, Executive Director; Joseph Regan, Finance Director and Brenda Pliszka, Executive Secretary/HR.

2. **Review and Approval of the Operating Budget for FY 2014**

Commissioner Cook stated the top page is the overall budget and the following pages are salaries and benefits.

Vice Chairman Yamamoto asked what is the percentage of increase/decrease for the budget of FY 2014. Mr. Regan said it is a 6% decrease in income and expenses agency wide predominantly due to HUD funding.

Commissioner Patterson stated that the agency spends \$404,000 for water. The cost of water has gone up and this does include the water at the main office as well as at all of our developments.

Commissioner Carella said that this budget is a combination of both State and Federal and asked why the AMPs are broken out. Mr. Regan stated that we are required to do so by HUD.

Mr. Regan stated that the Housing Authority lost \$400,000 in subsidy, 6% represents \$400,000 and that is the nature of our problem upfront. He stated that we made decisions and changes to the budget overall not necessarily in one specific area. Commissioner Cook stated the maintenance went down due to layoffs and the Housing Authority struck a deal with the unions which helped. Commissioner Cook said on water and electric you cannot go down 6% because it is what it is and we have no control over that. Mr. Regan said the salaries, benefits and insurance are funded which are the three schedules behind the budget. The net effect of all those transactions created us to make changes elsewhere in the budget and an adjustment was made differently to make this budget work.

Commissioner Cook asked Mr. Regan where is the antenna income. Mr. Regan said AMP 2 for \$186,606. Commissioner Cook asked if the Housing Authority ever budgets for late fees. Mr. Regan said no that is in other income.

Mr. Regan explained that salaries are funded the way they need to be funded. He said additional changes have been made to positions, hours and rates to the non-union staff. A deal was made with the Health Insurance and Dental Insurance. The Housing Authority saved an additional \$10,000 on the workers compensation insurance.

Commissioner Cook asked what is management fees. Mr. Regan said that is a PHAS rule. He said that it has to do with the central office, which the AMPS pay the central office a management fee.

Commissioner Cook did not understand why it is in the expense column. Mr. Regan said it is an expense to the program and income to the COCC. Commissioner Carella understands the State takes from the COCC where do they make the contribution. Mr. Regan said they do not really in the same sense they only pay a portion of the bills. Mr. Regan explained that the salaries are prorated to the state programs directly. Ms. Bouchard said with the exception of certain salaries and she explained this to the Commissioners. Mr. Regan explained how bills are prorated with the different programs.

Mr. Regan said that the Housing Authority is in the black or zero, therefore, we are in line with HUD's wishes operationally speaking but that is not to say in a month or two we get more knowledge that there may be other corrections that need to be made. He said when the sale of King Court occurs there will be an effect on this budget overall.

Commissioner Cook stated with the possible government shutdown they were informed at the Conn NAHRO meeting that the October payments will be made but after that it could stop.

Vice Chairman Yamamoto asked at the bottom it refers to OPEB what does that mean? Mr. Regan said it stands for "Other Post Employment Benefits" it has to do with our actuarial study basically the future cost of our insurance.

There was a discussion is regards to the financing for the redevelopment of Veterans Terrace and the effect it has on the rents at that property, which Federal subsidies will be increased. Ms. Bouchard stated that the Housing Authority is still under the fair market rents in the area.

The Chairman stated that we have budgeted \$158,000 for legal fees. Mr. Regan said that is correct. There was a discussion as to the different legal costs the Housing Authority will be encountering this year.

The Chairman stated that the travel amount needs to be adjusted since the Commissioners have not gone anywhere for years. He stated that in order to be a certified Commissioner you need one course each year and that you receive at the conferences. There was a discussion of some of the training in which HUD will be providing the Housing Authority.

Commissioner Cook said the Utility Allowance at Veterans Terrace means their utilities are not included in the 30% of income as they are under regular Section 8. Ms. Bouchard explained that the Housing

Authority received approval to increase rents at Veterans Terrace to \$899 for a 3-bedroom and \$829 for a 2-bedroom, which is an increase of \$50 each. She stated that only 9 people pay full contract rent out of 150.

Commissioner Carella stated that in the future he would like to have last year's budget or last month's report which is item e. under the Consent Agenda to compare items to.

There was a discussion regarding the Receptionist and Admissions Clerk positions.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to approve Resolution CT013-101-09-2013 approving the Operating Budget for FY 2014. Commissioner Patterson seconded the motion and it was carried by the unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

There being no further business before the Board of Commissioners, Chairman Keating entertained a motion to adjourn which was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto and seconded by Commissioner Patterson said motion being carried by the unanimous vote of the commissioners, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

I hereby certify that the above is a true and accurate record of the minutes of the special meeting held on September 27, 2013 by the Board of Commissioners of the East Hartford Housing Authority.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert N. Keating
Chairman of the Board

ATTESTED BY:

Debra M. Bouchard
Secretary/Executive Director

DMB:bmp